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THE
Mighty War God
and the
Angel Love



By JOHN TYLER WILLIAMS



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THE MIGHTY WAR GOD
AND THE ANGEL LOVE



JOHN T. WILLIAMS, A.B.

The Mighty War God and the Angel Love

A Tragedy in Five Acts

By

JOHN TYLER WILLIAMS, A. B.



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no 1,

Dedicated to
My Father

FOREWORD

This is a new and unique drama, depicting the horrors of war and the struggles within the minds of men engaged in a great strife. "The Mighty War God and the Angel Love" reveals which of these two powers, love or war, is the greater. The two superhuman characters are carried through five acts, together with the horde of "mites" which God has placed upon this earth and given the name of man.

The War God has proved that he is even more powerful than Satan. But man awakens, eventually, with the assistance of the Angel Love who understands true Nature and who does not try "to distort the works of God." At the close of the play, justice is meted out to all, and a new era begins.

Those who have seen or heard about Ince's wonderful motion picture drama "Civilization" realize how tremendous is the effect for good in a piece of propaganda that is at the same time a masterpiece of pure art. Such a work is THE MIGHTY WAR GOD AND THE ANGEL LOVE. It is a book you will read and re-read and urge your friends to read, for it is that rarest of rare combinations,—A BOOK OF ART WITH A GENUINE MESSAGE.

The Editor.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

THE WAR GOD

Two diplomats — puppets to the War God

Two generals, commanders of the opposing forces

An Emperor

Two mutinous officers

Another officer

THE ANGEL LOVE

A young sweetheart

A middle-aged wife, with babe

An old woman

Four grand-children

} Assistants to
the Angel Love

A Queen

A Jester

An Editor

A Page

Satan

Soldiers, buglers, attendants, escorts, etc.

The Mighty War God and the Angel Love

SATAN

O, blind and innocent earth, green velvet sward,
Spread out as for a playground of the nymphs,
Prepare for ruin! The curséd hand has swayed;
And under it weak man has, lilylike,
Bent into its seducing wake. Now here,
Now there, he follows meekly as a lamb.

Prepare for ruin! . . . For soon you are to be
The huge receptacle of misery
And death. On either hand a horde of men
Await; and when the proper signal's given,
They both will rush and run to meet each other.
In friendly greeting? Ah! Mid cannon's roar,
With bayonets fixed, and glaring, crazéd eyes,
Will man rush man, and each rip ope' the other!
In horrible melange of oaths and jabs,
And shrieks and death, the being civilized
Will show to full perfection his weak nature.
The curséd hand of War has drawn him to it,
And reasoning is given to the sword.

But curse not me, the Devil, for this plight.
My powers do not reach as far as this.
I've caused much misery, t'is true; but then,

My numbers have been fewer at a time.
Outclassed by one who plays with mighty millions,
I must resign and leave this hell to him.
The mighty War God now does rule this land
And all the beings on it: I am done.

Here will be hell played on a mammoth scale:
Where not a few men, but a million wail.
And from the scenes that follow I retire,
To get in readiness a roaring fire!

Exit.

CURTAIN

*And God beheld the earth, His work of ages :
Saw nought but Nature foaming at the mouth.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. A battle-ground. Hand-to-hand engagement taking place.

A SOLDIER

Take that!

ANOTHER

And that!

ANOTHER

Die, Devil, there!

ANOTHER

Oh, God!

ANOTHER.

You ask His aid too late.

ANOTHER

Now bite the dust!

ANOTHER

The Devil take us all!

ANOTHER

He has us now,
And in this hell our vengeance is appeased.

Two officers only remain standing. They clash.

OFFICER

The victory devolves on us, it seems.

OTHER

I fight for more than victory alone.
The sense of honor——

OFFICER

Bah! Speak not of that.
You get no honor here where men lie dead
Pierced by your sabre's thrust. A sounder reason
Should be your cause to kill at such a time.

OTHER

And one I have: I now defend my life.
My youth and strength I would not lightly give
To God so soon.

They cease fighting.

OFFICER

Of that dispel your fears.
A life in terms of years is never reckoned.
A moment only will suffice on earth

To spell a life; and he who has but few
Of those existing moments may rejoice
That he has 'scaped a world of durance vile.

OTHER

The world's not vile! And I will not consent
To take your version of it. I'll enjoy
To live my life, brimful of hope and pride.
My sweetheart, too, will aid me to success.

OFFICER

Aha! In love, I see. There lies your strength.
'Tis that which gives you all this energy.
But what, then, must you think of me? My wife,
And children four do all depend on me.
My strength must now be four-fold that of thine.
Your lives dependent are but nought, with mine.

OTHER

Casting down his sword.

Then kill me if you will! There lies my steel.
I'll cause no babe to starve, I pledge my word.
Nor will I murder longer: I am done!

Enter a General, unnoticed.

OFFICER.

Nay, far from that. Your course is but commenced.
My sword could never through your body run,

Just for the sake of seeing red blood flow.
Your life is spared, as you did spare my own:
My sword in war's grim treasury I cast!

Casts sword away.

GENERAL

How now, this farce; when man will lose his brain,
And talk of sparing lives—knee deep in dead?!
What say you, officer?

OFFICER

A ray of light
Has shed itself on me since I have met
This officer who understands true life.
And now I'm not so clamorous to fight.
I sicken at the sight of death and gore.

GENERAL

What's that? You talk as one who's lost his mind!
Get back to camp, and take your captive with you.
A ray of light! The sight of death and gore!

OFFICER

To other officer.

I think our task of murdering is done.

They exit.

Enter another General, on the other side.

1ST GENERAL

Hello, comrade! You gave us quite a fight:
But we revealed who had the hand of pow'r.

2ND GENERAL

Oh well, my friend, the war is but begun;
And all these skirmishes are only play.
Our men would restless be, if they could not
Partake of this which gives them exercise.
And in the future will a time arrive
When brains will count for victory—not men.

1ST GENERAL

And you would be, according to your word,
That man of brains. The thought's ridiculous!
I am the brains infused in this great war;
For strategy was bred right in my life.

2ND GENERAL

You've said enough. You're nothing but a brag.
A useless tail upon humanity.
Draw forth your sword from out its rusty scabbard!

1ST GENERAL

Well said! We now will see who is the better.

They draw swords.

You fight a champion.

2ND GENERAL

An easy task.

They cross swords.

1ST GENERAL

The rule is that—

2ND GENERAL

No quarter will we ask.

1ST GENERAL

I foiled an officer this very day.

2ND GENERAL

I take two at a time. 'Tis only fun.

Thunder in distance. They cease fighting.

1ST GENERAL

Hark!

More thunder.

'tis the mighty God of War! Make way

They separate.

For him who gives to us our fighting spirit!

Exit.

2ND GENERAL

How fortunate that he returns to-day,
To view this scene of glory, most sublime!

Exit.

Enter War God.

WAR GOD

Oh, home, how dear you are to me once more!
Awaiting, as you were, with outstretched arms,
Your prodigal. Again I have returned.
For this display my heart has longed for years.
My great endeavors have at last succeeded,
And from the soil is pulled, both branch and root,
The mighty tree of peace! We may rejoice
That on the earth the War God reigns supreme!
What food you offer to my hungry eyes!
The soul that languishes—the one in death!
I long have thirsted for this wholesome draught:
Sweet scene of misery and death! What bliss!

A soldier groans.

And music for my ears! You withhold naught
To feed my being with an added power.
My spirit wakens in this land of war;
And with it comes a brand new lease of life!

But, I've progressed as far as I can go.
It seems that I cannot embroil the whole
Of this great sphere; but only part of it.
I must be ever present, here and there,

To make my men fight well. It is too much.
I worry when my powers prove so small.

Enter two Diplomats.

My diplomats. I wonder what they want.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Aha! Most worthy War God, at your service.

2ND DIPLOMAT

And I, O, mighty sovereign.

1ST DIPLOMAT

What is wrong?

WAR GOD

Could I complain of this success and say
That there is wrong? Ah, no! 'Tis nearly right.
I revel in the sight before my eyes.
But e'en with this much done, there seems to be
A weighty problem hanging on my mind,
And I am not completely satisfied.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Are we not working hard enough, my Lord?

2ND DIPLOMAT

Do not enough men die each day for you?

WAR GOD

Ah, yes, you serve me well, and bring success:
But even with success a worry grows.
My greed is like that of the common folk,
And though I have one-half of all this earth
At war, I hunger for the other half.
A God of War should have no need of help
To bring to pass that mentioned masterpiece;
But still it happens that, like common folk,
A helper must assist me in my work.

1ST DIPLOMAT

A helper!

WAR GOD

Yes. A son, with nerve of steel!

2ND DIPLOMAT

But how could such condition come to pass?

WAR GOD

There is but one successful way to do it.
A mate I'll take unto myself, and she
Will cause my wish to be fulfilled. A son,
With fighting red-hot blood! Then when the earth
Is boiling in one place he will take charge
Of it: and I'll then go to other lands,
Inciting every nation, every race.

1ST DIPLOMAT

A noble plan, and very well conceived;
'Twould seem to me, however, quite a task.

WAR GOD

A simple matter. Love can always spring
Between two souls, no matter how they differ.
When once I'll see the mate to do my bidding,
I will let love transform us into one;
And I, the stronger soul, will voice the trend
Of all affairs.

2ND DIPLOMAT

But what about our work?
Must all this glory cease now for a spell?

WAR GOD

No more than you would care to end your life.
This glory gives us life, so do not cease.
Continue dealing death, decay and ruin;
But do it on a larger scale. The work's
Now small, but you will see what time will bring.
Talk to your generals and emperors
With chosen words, their anger to prolong.
Keep to your task with never-ending zeal;
And do not stop the work a single day!

2ND DIPLOMAT

We'll do your bidding. Also may you prosper
In the new venture which you undertake.

Exit diplomats.

WAR GOD

Fear not, weak minds, that I will ever fail;
For with success like this to feed upon,
My greatness does increase a hundred fold,
And will continue 'til the earth is cold.
I now will go to seek a willing mate,
And then the son, to share with me his fate.

CURTAIN

SCENE II. Evening mess in camp.

A SOLDIER

This fighting gives a man an appetite.

ANOTHER

You bet! We're hungry first for blood, and then
For food.

ANOTHER

I got my share of blood to-day.
At least ten men got in my bayonet's way:
And as I'd run them through, they'd grasp their hearts
And yell an oath; enough to make one sick.

ANOTHER

They say a bayonet stings when it goes through.
I stopped to drink to-day, and, as I paused,
A soldier, wounded unto death, cried out,
"For God's sake, man, go back! It's hell! If you
Can keep from getting jabbed, be sure to do it."
And then he rolled, and I did see his back,
A mat of blood. I left him groaning there.

ANOTHER

Then did you sicken at the sight and run?

REPLY

I did not dare. With hundreds of our men
Already down, and victory needing me,
I rushed ahead, and tried to kill the more!

ANOTHER

A Devil's game is this. But since we're here,
We've got to do our duty.

ANOTHER

Or get done.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

ANOTHER

And did you notice how the bullets rained?
They shrieked like crazy crickets whizzing past!

ANOTHER, *who has a wound on temple.*

My comrades on both right and left were hit.
They fell in heaps beside me as I ran,
And I obtained this wound.

ANOTHER

A lucky dog!

ANOTHER

Yes, lucky for a day; but on the morrow
A worse fate may be his.

ANOTHER

Aw, pessimist!
I don't see why you came to war at all.

ANOTHER

To cast a gloom on us.

REPLY

Oh, no, not that:
I wanted to eat hardtack and drink soup.

ANOTHER

You'd better drink the blood of enemies,
And eat the hardtack that you rob from them!

ANOTHER

Be still! Here comes a general and staff.

Enter a general and aides, with the two mutinous officers.

GENERAL

Attention, men! Here are two officers,
Who, having lost their minds, refuse to fight:
And I do bring them here to have their trial.
Among true men of steel I bring these hounds,
Our officer, and, there, his prisoner.
It happ'd that on a most important spot,
These two men clashed. Their men had all been killed.
A victory there for us was imminent,
Had these men fought like soldiers, and not babes.
But they began to prattle 'bout themselves,
And talk of getting sick of death and gore.
Then were their swords thrown down upon the ground,
And, I believe, they would have kissed each other,
Had I not chanced to see them when I did.
Thus, have I brought them here for proper judgment:
To you, who are real fighters through and through,
I offer up these men. What say you, first?

A SOLDIER

If they are now unfit to fight, they should
Be killed, your Honor.

ANOTHER

I would the same for them.

ANOTHER

I think the guard-house is a splendid place
For such as they. They may recover later.

ANOTHER

Most noble general, I would not waste
These men by peaceful death. They're still of use.
It would be fun to see two cowards charge
Alone across a field, in face of death.
So, I would keep them 'til we fight again,
And send them on ahead to meet the foe.
Then could th' entire army see the fun,
And watch them sink to earth.

ALL

Hurrah! Hurrah!

GENERAL

That meets with much approval, and 'tis good.
To-morrow will we storm a fortress strong,
And you will lead the charge, through fire and shell.
The one with flag, the other with a sword.
Far in advance of us we'll start you off,
And see how far you'll go before you cast
Your weapons down again!

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

GENERAL, *to aides.*

Conduct these cowards to the guard-house now,
And feed them well, for their last meal on earth.

Exit aides with officers.

You braves may now break ranks and get your rest;
For on the morrow comes another test.

Exit.

A SOLDIER

A little game of cards before that rest.

ANOTHER

Let's make it big, for this may be the last.

ANOTHER

Who starts the deal to-night?

ANOTHER

It's up to Jack.

ANOTHER

But he's not here. What's up? Is he transferred?

ANOTHER

Shot through the head to-day. I saw him fall.
He plays to-night in Hell.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

ANOTHER

This may be my last night at shuffling cards.

ANOTHER

Then do it well, so we'll remember you.

ALL

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Enter War God, unobserved.

WAR GOD

A jolly bunch of men, these servants mine!
They play this game of death as if no chance
Were run at all. A life is nought to them.
Their trump at cards is death, and happy when
In drawing, they can get a good, full hand!
No dismal thoughts of worldly things can now
Creep in to mar the pleasure of their lives.
Into another world they have been led,
And free to feast on Nature as she is.
Each man is civilized—Ha! Ha!—but still
Content to do me homage when I call:
Which proves that through all ages past, the world
Has changed but little. Still the power's mine!
All nations, every man, must answer to

My call! I dread the wait; for it will take
Some years to rear a helper to direct
The legions that I will send forth to war!

Angel Love appears to War God.

What now?!
Is this an Angel flitted down from Heaven?
An Angel, who in flight has lost her way,
And drops again to earth? How beautiful!
Fair one, how happ'd it that you should alight
In such a place as this? You must be lost;
And, tired, you fling yourself down here to rest.
What is your name?

ANGEL LOVE

My name it matters not;
Nor am I lost or tired, as you surmise.
My home's the earth, and I go every place
Where beings live, to give them hope and cheer.

WAR GOD

I fail to see where here you can assist;
For all my men are filled with happiness,
And need no hope or cheer.

ANGEL LOVE

That may be so,
And I'll not cast a doubt upon the truth
Of it. I hope 'tis true. But you did say
Not long ago that you would have a son;

And it would give you much more happiness
To see th' entire earth upheaved. Then all
Could murder and rejoice.

WAR GOD

I said that much,
And more. A mate I would unto myself
To make that glory certain. She has come!
Descending from the Heavens pure and bright,
Prepared to make a gorgeous home for me!

ANGEL LOVE

'Twould have to be a home for each of us!
Wherein we'd both enjoy its brilliancy.

WAR GOD

A brilliant home! Ah, yes, that would it be!
A model home for all upon the earth.

ANGEL LOVE

And, to create a model for the earth,
This home would be acceptable to all.
For housewives and their babes, as well as men:
For sweethearts, and the younger children, too.

WAR GOD

What! All in war? The housewives, sweethearts, all?
I think that step would be impossible.

ANGEL LOVE

I spoke not then of war. It was of home.
The model home in which we both could live,
And see its benefits.

Disappears.

WAR GOD

Wait! Do not go!
I would that we could plan our home the more.
I've not refused you anything you ask;
So hear me. Please return and hear me speak
My love. I fear that I neglected that
In our brief interview. She's gone! And where?

SOLDIERS

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

WAR GOD

Oh, vulgar devils, cease!
Give me a silent moment for my thoughts.
She's gone! And here I am, alone, to think
Of her: the fairest ever stepped on earth!
Will she return again? Quite possible.
And when she does return, then will I greet
Her with a grand surprise; for I shall work
To make our home the loveliest of them all!

Exit.

SOLDIERS

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

CURTAIN

*Evil may reign in souls for but a spell:
Then Conscience drives its victim down to Hell.*

ACT II.

Same Evening.

SCENE: Throne-room in an Emperor's palace.

*The Emperor is seated upon his throne. Attendants.
Jester is seated on a cushion, near throne.*

EMPEROR, *Casting away a manuscript.*

My God! Ten thousand more to feed the birds
Of prey! And nothing gained as yet. A year
Of fruitless warfare has been waged, and all
The land laid waste. And in that year of war
A million of my loyal men lie dead,
And other millions have been maimed for life.

JESTER

Ah, Sire, those are the fruits of war.

EMPEROR

Be silent, dog! Play with your dunce's head.

JESTER, *rising.*

The dunce's head is dead, my Lord. I have
Cast off that ancient plaything for some new
Which please me better: for my sword and shrapnel
Now are my delight.

Exit.

EMPEROR

Even the fool has taken to the game;
Striving to be an equal with the rest.
But when we play a fool's game, as we are,
He then can beat us at it. With his toys
He mimics his superiors, and then,
With neither gain nor loss he wiles away
His hours: while we, pretending to be wise,
Allow both wholesale murder and destruction.

Enter a page.

PAGE

There are two men without, my Lord. They would
A word with you.

EMPEROR

Two men; and what's their mission?

PAGE

Two diplomats, fresh from the seat of war.

EMPEROR

More diplomats! Two hagglers with their words
You'd better say: for had they but possessed
Diplomacy, there'd been no war at all.
But I will hear them speak, as little harm
Can come from the brief interview I'll give.
Admit them.

Exit page.

They'll regret intrusion here.
These men who play with words in times of peace,
And finally accomplish nought but war!

Enter Jester.

JESTER

I now have made the rounds, and all is well.

EMPEROR

What mean you, "All is well."?

JESTER

The household, Sire:
The butler, and the servants, all are well.
And ev'n the roast, I think, will be well done.

EMPEROR

Withhold your cursed work with tongue and lung!
Let silence rule your body for a spell.

Jester seats himself.

My thoughts and words I must direct on these

Enter diplomats.

Two worthy looking subjects from the front.
Speak out, my men, and let your narrative
Of what you've seen and heard and done be brief.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Your majesty, we have good news for you.

EMPEROR

What! Peace proposals, I infer from that.

1ST DIPLOMAT

No, not so soon, but we're in hopes of peace.
Our mission is to tell you of success
Attained by your brave men. A fighting mass
Of demons, ripping through the foe, to gain
A victory for their noble Emperor!

EMPEROR

A mass of demons!

1ST DIPLOMAT

Yes. To-day they stormed
A hillock, where the enemy lay strong.
With shell and bayonet they did advance,
And, after hours of bloody give and take,
They won the spot. It was a noble fight!
And with this point of vantage now attained,
Th' entire front is strengthened, and your men
Have taken on new power, strength, and courage.

EMPEROR

So! Had they need of these? From all reports
My men were ever filled with strength and courage.

And they did take the hillock! Was it made
Of granite, or of sand? Or did the place belong
To some poor farmer, who through years of toil
Had fitted up his vineyard on the spot?
Whate'er it was, no-one could tell by now;
All seeped in blood of good, true, loyal men,
And garnished with their bodies and debris!
You say that we can hold the hill? It gives us great
Advantage? Well, why cannot we proceed
To win a victory, th' effect of which
Will stop this war, and bring us welcome peace?
This slaughter cannot end by standing still:
By jostling back and forth without effect.

2ND DIPLOMAT

Your Majesty, we are not generals;
We only tell you what has taken place.

EMPEROR

Indeed! 'Tis hard to tell you what you are.
Had you been generals before this war,
Now could we be enjoying blessed peace.
But you have wrongfully fulfilled the task
Which you were set to do. You both have played
While earnest work was waiting to be done.
And, after you have failed so miserably,
You dare to still retain your former titles,
And say that you possess diplomacy!
What have you done out on the battle's front
To bring to bear a peaceful settlement?
You're only visitors, out near the firing line,

To view a mighty man-hunt for a time.
Then you return to me, as heralds only,
And revel in your tales of death and woe.
Begone! You have but one more chance to do
At this late hour what I expect of you.
Do not return again until some news
Of settlement can grace your lips.

1ST DIPLOMAT

But, Sir,

How can a settlement be brought about,
When you have an opponent who does hate
The very thought of you? An Emperor
Who, if he had the chance, would run you through,
And drink your blood with glee?

2ND DIPLOMAT

And how could we
Expect to swerve him from his chosen course?
He'll never be content until he owns
Your fertile lands, and makes your riches his.
In his huge coffers would he place your wealth,
And rid the earth of you.

EMPEROR

And I did think
The selfsame things of him before this war.
Mistrust and jealousy have had their way,
And led us to this end. I still despise
The hound, and would that he were cast in hell!
But, when we pause to ferret out the reason

For sending millions to ignoble deaths,
The fallacy of all the strife's made plain,
And proves that anger drives us all insane.
You are the monsters who have spun this web;
And now you must unwind it. Waste no time!
Again I tell you go!

1ST DIPLOMAT

We will, my Lord;

And on the morrow, in the lion's den,
We'll grapple with his views and make him yield.
First one, and then the other, will expound
The awful truth, until he offers peace.

EMPEROR

It must be done.

2ND DIPLOMAT

We'll do our best, my Lord.

Exit diplomats.

EMPEROR

And that could not be worse, with such as they!

JESTER

Now votes for women soon will come to pass.

EMPEROR

What, dog! What mean you by such fool remarks?

JESTER

They'll have to vote, for there'll be no men left.

EMPEROR

Out of my sight! Your nonsense drives me mad.

JESTER

As does the nonsense of your diplomats.

EMPEROR

He has it right, at that! I fain would send
Him, to affect the final terms of peace!

Enter a page.

What wish you now?

PAGE

A wretched man without would speak with you.

EMPEROR

How know you he is wretched?

PAGE

He did say it.

EMPEROR

And why should he be thus? Is he half starved,
Or has he lost a brother in the war?

PAGE

I think he's had enough to eat, my Lord;
But something must be gnawing at his brain.

EMPEROR

What is his station?

PAGE

He's an editor.

EMPEROR

Admit him then,

Exit page.

poor devil that he is.

JESTER, *Sings*:

I knew a printer's devil once;
He had to clean the type.
He was the next thing to a dunce,
But made a splendid swipe.

Enter Editor.

EMPEROR

What now, good man, do you desire of me?

EDITOR

Pray, do not call me good, your Majesty:
The title I do not deserve.

EMPEROR

Well then,
What mischief have you done that sends you here?

EDITOR

I've lied, your Majesty. Each day I've crammed
My publication full of blase untruths
About the war, until I'm sick of it.
Each battle's been a victory for us:
Each time our men are always at the top.
And, what is worse, the people do believe it!

EMPEROR

But is it not the program we had planned?

EDITOR

Ah, yes!
A program of deceit and censorship;
To keep the truth from those who ought to know.
And now they clamor at my very doors,
To hear the next grand lie that I can tell.
Morale! What have we sacrificed for that?
Our good names and our honor, first of all;
And then your soldiers on the battlefield.
Last, but not least, the people left at home;
For they've been led to think that all is well.

EMPEROR

It is a wicked game, but worry not
So much at this late hour what you've done.

Success requires it, and 'til the end
Be bold in your assertions, although false.
Go rest your troubled mind until the morrow;
Then 'twill be easier to think of things
To please th' excited populace. Farewell.

Exit Editor.

Another conscience pricked beyond endurance!

Enter a page.

PAGE

Your Majesty, our noble queen would have
A word with you, before she takes her rest.

EMPEROR

More news of misery and poverty!
Admit her.

Exit page

She is sad, as well as I.

Flourish: Enter Queen and escort.

My dear, whate'er you have to say this night,
Be careful of your words. My mind is full
Of deepest sorrow, and of bitterness.

QUEEN

I know, my Lord, without your saying so.
I grieve when it becomes my lot to have
To speak of horrid things: but these are facts

That I believe, I must acquaint you with.
If I could not, then would I wake the night;
For I would think of you in your distress,
And sleep would be an enemy to me.
My news may cheer you up somewhat, for I
Have done some tender kindnesses to-day.
An agéd lady was the first to ask
My aid. In rags, and starving, did she come,
And begged a mite of food. She was the charge
Of three grand-children whom the father left,
To go to war. Their mother's long since dead.
I gave her food, and plenty. Then she blessed
Her good queen and her king, and journeyed home.
And then another came: she was quite young,
And needed nourishment. I gave it her,
And made her happy also. Others came;
And through the day a never-ending stream
Of wretchedness and poverty. But all
Were happy as they took their leave, for I
Had saved each life. Their blessings now on us
Will they bestow.

EMPEROR

And all, you say, were women?

QUEEN

Yes, all.
I understand that nearly every man
Is fighting for his country: all at war.
The women folk have taken up the work
Their husbands used to do. But that, you know,

Cannot endure much longer. They are forced
To yield unto the nature of their sex,
And now they beg for food.

EMPEROR

This cannot last.

Two nations fighting out their very souls
For want of common sense! And when 'tis done,
A hundred years will be required to place
Us on our former footing. We cannot
Refuse to fight, for then the enemy
Would soon proclaim a victory, and call
Us cowards. Would to God that He could find
A way to end it all!

JESTER

I saw two dogs a-quarreling o'er a bone.

EMPEROR

Yes, fool.

JESTER

And as they'd tug and snarl, the poor
Bone suffered miserably: first in one mouth
And then in both. But 'twas not worth the having.
There was no meat upon it, but they fought
Like mad, all blood and foam: and then at last,
With all their powers spent, and nothing gained,
They went home with their tails between their legs,
And left the bone a-lying on the ground.

EMPEROR

A foolish story.

JESTER

But it taught me much.
I now have given up the game of war;
The jealous struggle, yielding only loss.

QUEEN

A wise man for a fool!

EMPEROR

Pray, then, that all
The earth might be inhabited by such!

QUEEN

My dear, I now will leave you to your thoughts,
And to my chamber go, to rest and hope.
Do try to cast these worries from your mind,
For on the morrow will you meet again
These obstacles, and need a good, clear brain.
May you sleep well; and I will pray to God
That soon our troubles cease. Good night, my Lord.

Exit.

EMPEROR

A good, clear brain! I once did that possess:
But now a million flickerings of thoughts
Electrify it, driving me insane.

My land lies idle and the people starve:
My ablest men are murdered by the score!
And then, two fools approach, who gloat in tales
Of misspent loyalty to me. They call
My soldiers demons on the battlefield!
I am the demon, and that other fool,
Who calls himself an Emperor! Two noble men!
Both cursed murderers of blackest die!
Would that I had no mind at all, and roamed
A forest with the beasts: for beast I am!

The moon! It once did shed its silvery light
On us. But now, behold! From yonder sky
The cold and bloody orbit stares at us:
And only one expression—that of awe!
The death-mask of some ancient Diety,
Who now defies the earth and all the hell
Enacted there. My God! That crimson glow!
Reflecting back to us the blood of men!
And drinking with complacency this gore!

To Jester.

Sleep, dog, upon your hearth. How fortunate
To be without a brain! You have no cares
To mar the joys of rest and gluttony:
Impossible for you to live a hell,
Or even go to one. Your simple mind
Has not the power to commit a sin;
So, Heaven itself must take you when you die.
But education's made *us* civilized,
And with the strength that we've acquired from that
We seek to tear apart the works of ages.

With all the benefits that God's bestowed,
We struggle to remain barbarians.
What can become of us, who claim to be
The brains and leaders of the common folk?
If there's a hell, we will fall into it;
And ne'er will Heaven cast a ray on us!

I'll to my rest; but not a wink of sleep
Can I expect this nightmare to afford.
Would that I'd die before the rising sun,
And go where I belong: another hell!
The Devil himself would be a pacifier!

CURTAIN

*There comes a time when even man awakes;
And then a diff'rent attitude he takes.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. Night of same day.

SCENE: *Soldiers sleeping on battle-ground. War God enters and views them. Occasional rifle shots are heard in the distance.*

WAR GOD

A few are still at work. 'Tis not complete;
For by the light of torches should they fight.
You little mites upon the sward seek rest,
But, know you, it is but a waste of time.
You miss the splendor of the glorious night;
Wherein the gorgeous lights of fire and shell
Would easily transform it into day.
The lightning streaks spit from your rifles mouths
Would make a handsome spectacle to see!
But, idling thus, you do the home delay
That I am wont to make.

A soldier rolls over and groans.

- Now, helpless wretch what is't you dream?
Has some bold enemy just run you through,
Or do you strain to keep him at a distance?
Much good your rest will do you sleeping thus!

A SOLDIER, *half awakening.*

There, damn you! Show me another! Take that, you
fiend!

WAR GOD

Your rest produces nought. You will awake
To find an empty victory. Then joy
For you will be most hard to contemplate.

Restless ones move.

Ah, no, this sleep does only dull your minds.
It must not be much longer. You rehearse
The pleasures of the previous day, and reap
No benefit therefrom. 'Tis phantom play.
Henceforth be not so drowsy when night falls;
But show that you prefer to keep right on.
And with the vim acquired by drinking blood,
Rush on, and let your sharp steel spill the more!
Then, in the cool night-time, will you obtain
Sufficient gore for warm draughts at the dawn.
My Angel Love expects great things from me,
And, as my servants, disappoint me not.
Sleep well to-night, but make this one your last:
The bugle starts a new life with its blast!

Exit.

Enter a sentinel.

SENTINEL

This death-like silence weighs itself on me.
I wish the morn would come.

Exit.

A ray of white light appears: then Angel Love.

ANGEL LOVE

Oh, poor misguided souls, who now relax
To gain new strength to kill your fellow men,
List' to the voice of Love, which you've forgot!
You entered into this grim play of death,
Not thinking what the true results would be:

And, being kept excited, as you are,
You have no chance to think of aught but war.
The homes that once were cheerful now are filled
With dismal thoughts of what might be your fate;
And all the firesides that once did glow
So brightly, now are dimmed in agony.
You men and boys who now commune with sleep,
Are not contented with a lot like this;
But, held as prisoners, you only curse
The coming day which calls you forth to kill.
In your excitement you've forgot to think
Or even dream of home, where you should be.

But now to change! You boys who came to war
To garner glory in gay uniforms,
Are first to answer to my call. Awake!
Behold the home which longs and waits for thee!

Disappears.

A youth slowly awakens.

YOUTH

I cannot sleep. How strange I feel! Some pow'r
Is tugging at my soul; I know not what.
It seemed to say "Awake!", so here I am,
Pulled from that awful dream.

Living picture of his home and mother, in background.

My God! What's this?
My mother! Sitting in the same old chair.
No, it cannot be she, for now she's gray,
And too much age is heaped upon her brow.
But that's my home. Yes, there's the broken blind,

The walnut tree which shades the well,—why, look!
There's Rover! Good old dog! Yes, that's my home!
The home I'm fighting for.

His sweetheart enters picture.

And who is this?

Gertrude, my love! How cheerful you do seem!
What! Now they greet with tears? I wonder why?
They should be gay and happy, there at home,
Without a cause for worry, like I have.
I wonder if they're lonesome there, alone?
Do not be grieved, for I will soon return;
And then we'll all be happy once again.
But will I soon return? I may be shot
To-morrow, by a devil's bolt of steel;
Or spread upon the ground by someone's knife!
Ah, no! You must not fear: that will not be.
The Lord is with me, and He'll give me strength
To fight ten times the harder toward the end.
Then I can hasten back to you, my dears.

The picture disappears.

They're gone! And I did see it all so plainly.

Picture of a different mother and sweetheart appears. Much different in dress, especially.

Why! Who is this? My eyes must now deceive me;
For this is not my mother and my love.
And dressed so queerly! Odd that this should be.
It is the family of an enemy!
But why should I see this? And they do weep,
Much as my own. It seems that all do mourn.
Have they a son or loved one in this fray,

That I'm to try to kill if I can do it?
And does he dream, on yonder battlement,
Of slaying me, and ruining my life?

The picture disappears.

It's gone again! 'Twas pleasant,—yet how sad!
How sad that we should try to kill each other,
And break up homes that once were filled with
pleasure!

Ah, no! I'll not kill him or any more
That face me on the field. I'll take death first:
For, now that I've been shown the wickedness
Of all of this, I swear to God that I
Renounce allegiance to a murderer's creed!
If I am killed, dear folks at home, 'twill be
To save another home what you'll endure.

Sleeps.

Angel Love appears.

ANGEL LOVE

And now you men who have betook a wife;
And she perhaps, has entered motherhood:
Behold the spectacle that you've forgot!
The home that needs a husbands' supervision,
But struggles sadly on 'gainst poverty.

Disappears.

Middle-aged man awakens.

MAN.

I thought I heard an Angel call. 'Twas soft
And sweet, and sounded like my darling's voice.
I had almost forgotten her.

Picture of his wife and babe appears.

Why, there!
My Mary and the child! See how she smiles!
But yet how sad it is! That's not the way
She used to smile when I was there. 'Twas gay,
And filled with all the pure essence of joy.
I wonder if they have enough of food?
I left her money when I came away;
But still it was not much. And it has been—
My God! It's been a year since I left home!
Ah, no, they have no money by this time,
Unless it's giv'n by hands of charity.
Perhaps she's worked—yes, slaved—to save herself
And child from death.

A milkman appears in picture.

Ah! There comes food for them.
What? Passing by? Now she has stopped the man.
Note that expression on her face: so full
Of anguish now. She's begging him for food!
And he will not consent to leave a drop!
Now on her knees! Arise, Marie, and tell
The stingy dog that I will pay him well
For what you get, when I return from war.
There! Now she's been successful. See the joy
Light up her saddened countenance. Oh, God!
That it should come to this! That she should have
To beg, when all was once prosperity!
And here I am, a common murderer,
Far from a home that needs my services.

The picture disappears.

What have I done? I've helped kill many men
Who had a home much as my own was there.
And what will e'er become of them? The wives
And babes will starve, or live in pauper's dens!
Oh, what a ghastly lesson, come too late!
My strength is leaving me. I wish that I
Might either die at once or hasten back
And give assistance, 'ere it is too late.
A murderer! How could I look again
Into an honest face and bear the shame?
Oh, kill me Lord; the strain is now too great
To still remain on earth. My soul is stained:
So, throw me into Hell, for I am done!

Sleeps.

Angel Love appears.

ANGEL LOVE

There still remains another class of men
To reach before my mission's at an end:
The elder men, conservative and wise.
Although they'd nearly reached the goal of life,
The call to arms outweighed their better judgment:
And, reck'ning not the outcome, took a part.
Awake, you men, who make the laws for men!
Consider if this step was well worth while.

Disappears.

An Old Man awakens.

OLD MAN

The night is one huge nightmare, full of dreams
In which I kill the enemy, or waste

My strength against a horde of vicious devils.
What could be worse? I'm glad that I'm awake,
For now perhaps my pipe can still my nerves.

Picture of his aged wife and four little grandchildren toiling in a field.

Great guns! What's that? It's Anna and the babes!
Oh, how I wish that I were home once more!
To hold those young grandchildren on my knee
Once more before I die, would seem so good.
But why, I wonder, do they spade and toil?
Perhaps their granny's teaching them to work;
To make them big and strong when they grow up.
See how they turn each spade of dirt, then rake
Their little spot all smooth. Why, now they sow
Some sort of seed. Perhaps a flower bed.
But look! They're growing tired of the task,
And leaning on their tools with sober looks.
And Anna weeps! I think I see it all.
They're trying to produce some grain for food.
Where are the horses and the sulky plow,
That used to turn the whole field in a day?

My God! They must be sold or dead; and ev'n
If they did have these things, they could not use them.
There'd be no men to man the plow, or feed
To give the horses. How can they exist?
Oh, would that I could be with them once more,
And try to save their lives! See how they toil.
Why should this come to pass? I will be killed,
And they will kill themselves by work and worry.
The only hope that's left is that Above.

In Heaven may we meet and then rejoice.
But how can I expect to enter there?
My blood-stained hands would bar me from the goal.
Oh, God, remove me from this earth, or else
Allow me to return and save my lambs!
I can no longer fight and kill, since now
Its awful wickedness is shown to me.

Sleeps.

Angel Love appears.

ANGEL LOVE

Love has now played its part this glorious night.
The truth, infused with reason, has been shed
On all the souls engaged in this great strife.
Sleep on, eased minds, and when the dawn arrives,
Your new thoughts will have changed you all aright.
I've seen your brothers—not your enemies—
On yonder battlements; and they have seen
The same as you. Now all do understand:
Except your officers, who'll count as nought.
When on the morrow you will make the charge,
Betake yourselves into the arms of love.
Your brothers there await your coming. Go!
And if there shall occur a single death,
It will be caused from joy alone, or else
All pow'r of love has vanished from the earth!

Disappears.

CURTAIN

ACT III.

SCENE II. *Early the next morning.*

SCENE: *Outer works of a large fortress. Parapet. Two sentinels are pacing back and forth, each humming a tune.*

1ST SENTINEL

Do you not know the fate that you would meet,
If any officer should hear you sing?

2ND SENTINEL

Yes, I would then be placed upon a stage
To sing to royalty.

1ST SENTINEL

What! With that voice?

2ND SENTINEL

Why, sure! It's far superior to yours.

1ST SENTINEL

Superior to mine! Well, be it so.
But why, I wonder, do we feel so gay?

2ND SENTINEL

I know what makes my spirit bubble o'er:
Last night I had a troubled sleep—a dream.

Why, never have I had such dreams before!
Awakening, it seemed, I saw my wife and home!
And, gazing at the view before my eyes,
I made a solemn vow.

1ST SENTINEL

A vow! How queer!
And I did so myself. I saw my home
And mother. Then my sweetheart came. They wept,
And seemed to be unhappy, both of them.
This war, I know, has caused it all. So then
It was that I did make my solemn vow.

2ND SENTINEL

And, pray, what was it?

1ST SENTINEL

Will you keep it still
If I do tell it you?

2ND SENTINEL

Why, certainly.
Why should a comrade give his friend away?

1ST SENTINEL

I vowed I'd never shoot to kill again.
And what was yours?

2ND SENTINEL

My Lord! I did the same.
My dream did sicken me of all this war;
And, if we're killed to-day by yonder foe,
We'll not die dealing death to wives and babes.

1ST SENTINEL

I fear not that, for something seems to say
That all is understood among the ranks.
Whate'er the power is that's caused this change
I cannot guess: but how the atmosphere
Has changed! The birds are even bold, and come
To sit and sing upon our battlements.

2ND SENTINEL

Yes, it is truly strange. My heart is light,
Where once it used to hang a ball of lead,
Awaiting some poor sinner's bayonet.

1ST SENTINEL

And see the sun, how brightly it does shine,
As if to say to us—

2ND SENTINEL

An officer!

Sentinels continue to pace . Enter officer and bugler.

OFFICER

Call to his post each man. To-day will see
The crucial struggle of this mighty war.

*Bugler blows. Blast is weak, Soldiers straggle in
and form attention.*

How weak that bugle's blast came forth! Like some
Young rooster's crow.

Begins an inspection.

BUGLER, *aside.*

It tasted strong enough.

A SOLDIER, *to another.*

I stuffed a sock inside it as he slept.

ANOTHER

I wish that this were our last fight.

ANOTHER

Who talks
Of fight, on such a day as this?

SOME

Not me!

ANOTHER

Be careful where you aim.

ANOTHER

You bet I will.

Officer addresses troops.

OFFICER

Now spread yourselves along this parapet,
And be in readiness when they approach.
Arise and fight when you do hear the bugle.

Exit.

A SOLDIER

Some good advice. I wonder where he's gone?

ANOTHER

His home is in the cellar when a fight
Is on. He watches through his periscope.

ANOTHER

I've fixed my bayonet. See what it does
When I strike at the loathsome enemy.

Breaks it.

ANOTHER

Oh, gentle bullets, when I start you off,
Sing songs of love as you flit o'er their heads.

ANOTHER

A poet in our ranks!

ANOTHER

Long live the poet!

Bugle in distance. Drums and noise.

ANOTHER, *rising*.

They're getting ready, fellows! Hear the drums!
With banners in the lead the enemy
Advances from the distant wood.

ANOTHER

Why, yes,
Their flag is coming on ahead! Two men
Is all that I can see.

ANOTHER

And only two,
To cross that broad expanse and taste our lead.

ANOTHER

What say you? If they taste of lead to-day,
Their persecutor will be Heaven itself!

ANOTHER

Another man is added to our list.
I do believe we're all of one accord.

ANOTHER

See them! They come as gaily as two men
Might do if they were only out for pleasure.

ANOTHER

They seem to chat with one another now.
They laugh, as if some joke were in the air.

ANOTHER

The one does wear a uniform like ours.
An officer, or else my eyes are weak.
He bears a sword; now swings it at the tops
Of waving grass, as they approach our stand.

ANOTHER

This step may be a ruse of yonder foe
To sacrifice their lives to learn our posts.

ANOTHER

Ah, no. It's just one step in that great change
Which has upset all former rules of war.

ANOTHER

Look now! Their army moves! A dusky streak
Much like a cloud emerging from the wood.

ANOTHER

But not a siege gun has been fired. It is
As quiet as a Sunday morn at home.

ANOTHER, *standing in front of muzzle of a defence
cannon.*

If their guns are as useless as our own,
They will not act to-day.

ANOTHER

God, man, look out!
That gun may go at any moment, Jump!
And if you prize your life at all, be quick!

REPLY

I seek a place I know is good and safe;
And were this muzzle larger, in I'd go.

ANOTHER

Come men! His mind is crazed. Let's try to save him.

REPLY

Withhold your good intentions, for with these
I've fixed the wires well.

Displays wire-cutters.

Bugle.

ANOTHER

Blow on, your honor, 'til your lungs do crack!
You only blow a welcome to our friends
Who hasten to be with us.

*Firing is heard in distance. Some soldiers drop,
for safety.*

Why drop? You are not hit, as yet. And from
The looks of things, you will not be to-day.

More distant firing.

Look there! They fire at the sky; and all
Their whistling bullets die away in space.

ANOTHER

They cannot see, or else have not the range.

ANOTHER

They see, but understand. Shooting at stars
Is nobler pastime than to shoot at men.

Enter Officer, with lieutenants.

OFFICER

I cannot understand it! Not a gun
Will fire: and soon they'll be of no avail.

Fortress soldiers fire.

What! Are they now so close that you must fire?

More soldiers fire.

What are you shooting at? An aeroplane?
Your sights must be at fault. You fire too high.

More fire.

Halt, where you are! What demon's in your souls,
That you will play with death so recklessly?

Who are those men out yonder on the field?
My God! Their flag is coming on ahead!

To lieutenants.

Bring in more men. 'Twill soon be hand-to-hand
That we must meet them!

Exit lieutenants.

Give me a rifle. I'll cut down the hounds
Who dare to come in pairs to plant their flag!

A SOLDIER

No. I will do the deed. There's time enough.

OFFICER

What! You refuse an officer?

SOLDIER

We all refuse, your honor: for to-day
No man will kill another, for the sake
Of saving some great wall of stone. Those lives
That are approaching are more dear to us.

OFFICER, *drawing sword.*

Well, fool, I'll show you who will kill a man!

Lunges at soldier.

Take that!

Misses soldier, and falls.

You beast!

SOLDIER

Come men! This is our chance.

Soldiers overpower officer.

OFFICER

What is this? Mutiny! You low-lived curs!
Take off these bonds, and fight to save your country.

SOLDIER

Our country's not in danger, my dear sir.
The greatest danger now is bound securely.

To other soldiers.

Take him to some good hiding place, and out
The way; for we need all this space.

Soldiers exit with officer.

OFFICER

You dogs!

*Shouts and murmurs of approaching army are
heard.*

A SOLDIER

Dogs that we are, let's meet them with a hand!

ANOTHER

See there! Confusion now among their ranks!
They stop!

More shouts and murmurs.

ANOTHER

I wonder what is wrong? Why, now
They're turning back! They turn and run!

ANOTHER

Hello!

Shouts of greeting to approaching officers.

Let down a ladder for our two brave friends;
And offer them the best that we can give.
They must be nervous, and quite weary, too,
From their long sojourn o'er the boggy ground.

ANOTHER

Their army's disappeared into the wood.
This is too much: just like a troubled dream.

Officers appear over ramparts. Greetings.

ANOTHER

Welcome, my friends! You surely have much nerve
To face a fortress like this all alone.
Here is refreshment. Take, and then explain.

ANOTHER

But why wear you the garb of one of us?

OFFICER

Because that's what I am. An officer,
But yesterday o'ercome upon the field,
By my friend here; another officer.

OTHER OFFICER

Do not say overcome. We both were ev'n;
But chance did make you seem my prisoner.

A SOLDIER

How queer! I do not understand.

OFFICER

Nor we.

It all has happened in the queerest manner.
We were condemned to meet a deadly fate
At your own hands, by coming as we did.
And now, it seems, that we must be in Heaven.

A SOLDIER

And Heaven it is, compared to yesterday.
Put up your flag, my friend, and let it wave
Beside our own.

Flag is raised.

Two friends now side by side!

Cheers from distant army.

We do regret that all our other friends
In yonder wood had not the confidence
To follow you, and make our step more certain.

OFFICER

There is no danger on that score; for all
I understand, have now refused to fight.
Like boys they seemed, when we did pass their ranks:
Almost beyond their officers' control.

A SOLDIER

Much like ourselves; for we chucked one away,
Because he wished to stop your progress there.
And then he called us "Dogs" and other names,
In payment for our services to keep
Him off the list of common murderers.

ANOTHER

It would be well, I think, to organize,
Now that we are in power. If we don't,
Some ruse will get us in the guard-house, where
We'll only think of what we might have done.

ANOTHER

The guard-house! Ah! We had not thought of that.
And if we get there once, 'tis certain death.
Let each man swear allegiance to our cause;
And if we still must die, let's die for peace!

ALL

Hurrah!

Enter a messenger.

A SOLDIER

Here comes a messenger. We'll hear from those
Who were so quiet on the other wall.
Hello, my friend.

MESSENGER

Where is your officer?

SOLDIER

What mean you, "Officer"? We once had such
But since the good God has restored our reason,
We get along quite well as now we are.
If you must speak of officers, begone!

MESSENGER

No, that was mere precaution when I asked.
I've come to bring you news of dire distress:
Where hasty action's needed, lest a group
Of our most loyal men will meet their death.

SOME

What! Death?

MESSENGER

Yes, some were lured into a trap
Set by our officers, when they descried
The mutiny. 'They will be shot 'ere long,
Unless we act at once. It happ'd that I
Was fortunate enough to be delayed;
And when I went to join my comrades,—gone!
And now they swelter in the slaughter pen.

A SOLDIER

Get into ranks!

To officers.

This task is up to you.
Lead us in double-quick to save their lives!

Enter a bugler.

Call the reserves at once, and sound a charge!

Bugle.

ONE OFFICER

See that each rifle's fitted well for work.

A bugle answers.

OTHER OFF

They answer their assistance!

1ST OFFICER

Forward march!

CURTAIN

*Ev'n might and power can quite unstable be,
Directed wrongly 'gainst humanity.*

ACT IV.

Same morning. Early.

SCENE: *Rendezvous of War God. The War God is seated on his throne.*

WAR GOD

The awful, wasted night has passed, and I
Do wish no other like it. Oh, the thoughts
That through my once clear brain have had their romp!
They never came to me like that before.
Evil and good, all mixed in grand confusion.
First, evil, when I'd try to plan success;
And good, when I would think of her, my love.
The night was wasted; so, how could they fight
When I, their head, had not the battle planned?
And all the blame is her's; for had she not
Appeared to me to talk of love and home,
I'd revel in more victory to-day.
Yes, she, who talked of model home, and then
Left me alone to do the making of it!
'Twas not the plan I had conceived; for she
Was to assist by giving me a son.
Then would her part have been complete. But now
Not knowing what my next step ought to be,
I hesitate, and lose what I have gained—this home.
Why should she come for one brief moment only,
Destroying all my plans, and then to vanish?
A stillness, mighty and unbearable,
Now weighs itself upon my war-torn earth:

And all the music for my thirsting soul
Has died away into eternity.
I cannot reason why the change should be:
Perhaps my trusted men can now explain.

Enter two diplomats.

What reason for your grave and worried looks?

1ST DIPLOMAT

My noble War God, there is something wrong.
We know not what has caused this change, but it
Has swept the earth like one great, magic storm.
Last Eve. we visited an Emperor,
Who at the outset was as full of fight
As one could wish. But now the mighty change
That's come upon him! All his thoughts are peace.
And when we did report to him that still
No peace proposals graced our new report,
He raved and railed at us, as one gone mad:
And would disown us as his diplomats.

WAR GOD

He never owned you! You must ne'er forget
That you belong to me.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Yes, that we do.
But he does think that we belong to him.
'Tis necessary if we wish to keep
His anger roused, and hold him to this war.

We talked to him of enemies, and what
They'd do if once he'd fall into their power.
And when we had completed we'd provoked
His anger once again to fighting point;
And left him in a mood to wreck the earth.

WAR GOD

Then why do you complain, if this is so?

1ST DIPLOMAT

Because the other half of what I'd say
Is still far worse than that which I have told.
The armies will not fight: they mutiny.

WAR GOD

What! Mutiny?

2ND DIPLOMAT

Yes, and 'twas I who saw the wicked work!
A beautiful attack was planned for you
Against the fortress yonder. But how strangely
And ev'n unwarlike did th' attack begin!
No heavy siege guns played upon the works,
Nor did the fortress answer back with fire.
Then, suddenly, two men were sent alone,
To charge across the field. It meant sure death,
Had any of the men desired to kill.
But they passed unmolested. Then the horde
Of seasoned veterans that lay in wait,
Came from their hiding in the inky woods,

And made as if to charge. But the attack
Had scarce begun before confusion reigned
Among their ranks; and then they turned and ran!
They had no life to fight; and when they'd fire,
'Twould be as if at visions in the sky.
The world is all upset, and what's the reason?

WAR GOD

Whate'er the reason is, I cannot say:
But now there's work to do. Do not delay.
Re-organize your men at once, and know
That anger still will make them fight for us.
You cannot stand and watch them: you must work.

1ST DIPLOMAT

What more could we have done than what we did?
We deal with Emperors, and you the men.
Our part was played when we did rouse our victim,
And you have worked each night to rouse your own.

WAR GOD

'Tis true; but there is something deeper to decipher;
And must be dealt with quickly, if at all.
These minor workings of the common mind
Are fleeting, and can well be overcome.
But you must hasten. Teach your generals
To see the folly in this childish move.
Give them encouragement, and when they have it,
Arouse once more their lust for blood and war.
To-night I'll school my men anew; and this
Will give us mightier power than e'er before.

2ND DIPLOMAT

But can you not suggest some mighty plan
For us to follow?

WAR GOD

I just gave it you.
And I can only add, go do your best.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Then will we ply our cunning with a zest;
And feed our generals on gallsome tales,
Th' effect of which we hope you soon will see.

Exit diplomats.

WAR GOD

So all refuse to fight; My warriors,
Who, yesternight, lay restless in their sleep,
Grappling with phantom enemies in dreams:
And now refuse to clash when they've the chance!
That is the curse of sleep; for then the mind
Has too much chance to take on other views.
And even I myself became confused,
Wrapped in the thoughts of gaining more success.
Instead of working for myself alone,
I've let an absent partner spoil it all.
It is absurd! But now I'll work alone,
And let my pow'rs afford me what they will.

Rays of light from above.

What! Now the change that o'er my being steals!
 I feel that mighty presence once again.
 I dare not look: for I am sure 'tis she.

Angel Love appears from above.

But how can I resist? I must regard
 Her charming form again!

Looks.

My God! From thence!
 Descending from the Heavens! And I—

A VOICE

Ascend

From Hell!

ANGEL LOVE

From hell, or no, you now are changed.
 And I do offer consolation to
 Your worried soul; and wish to pull you from
 This difficulty, ere it is too late.

WAR GOD

A difficulty?

ANGEL LOVE

Yes. You now do wave
 Between two fires, which creep towards your ruin.
 They're eating inroads slowly to your soul;
 And must soon be extinguished.

WAR GOD

What are fires,
That such as I should swerve aside for them?
I live by fire!

ANGEL LOVE

But not by fire of mind.
The brilliant glow which has prolonged your life
Was caused by matter ruined on the field:
The clash of arms, and light from burning homes.
In such displays the mind has ceased to act.

WAR GOD

But what, then, are the fires of which you'd speak?

ANGEL LOVE

Your present, and the future grand success
That you are wont to have. Before you wished
To draw th' entire earth beneath your hand,
You had success; and happiness was yours.
But suddenly your greed outweighed your reason,
And forced new plans into your crowded brain.
Then were your thoughts divided, and your mind
Assumed two channels in the stead of one.
And, know you, that no mind can do good work
In such condition. 'Tis not satisfied
With what the present brings; and broods on fancy.

WAR GOD

You speak the truth, and I have now declared
That I will henceforth wage my fate alone.
I've cast aside my hopes of aid from you.

ANGEL LOVE

No, do not that; for I have come to make
The greatest power on earth be symbolized
In your great soul. A master of the world!

WAR GOD

Then must it be a world of war. If not,
My power would be nought, for that's my life.

ANGEL LOVE

You are mistaken. War is not your life.
'Tis might which holds your presence on this earth.
You are the God of War, but should you rule
In any other station, you would be
As great as you are now. But what is that,
Compared to what I have in store for you?
With nearly all the earth disowning you,
The opportunity to act has come.
You must be tactful and obey the will
Of all the people. Do what they desire.

WAR GOD

I do. My men were born to fight. They crave
The daily struggles which mean life or death.

They love to play the animal, and live
Close to their mother Nature. 'Tis their life.

ANGEL LOVE

You only speak of man; but, think you, there's
A gentler sex upon this earth, who share
A silent fate with man. And not 'til you
Have likewise brought them under your dominion,
Will you attain the height of your desires.
These creatures are your greatest enemies,
For they abhor both war and you alike.
You've broken up their pleasures and their homes,
By forcing death upon their loyal mates.
Husbands and lovers have gone forth to war,
Ne'er to return to them, so dearly loved;
And all the blame is giv'n to you, the God
Of all the discontent that's been aroused.

Man does not crave these pastimes with the sword,
But loses in excitement all his reason;
And plunges into error unawares.
And, savagery, of which you love to boast,
Is not the nature of the present man.
They are not animals, as you would have them;
But sometimes are they forced to play the part.
And when you say that they're enjoying Nature,
You only jest, for Nature is the power
That tends to ever better things on earth.
Construction, not destruction, is its aim;
And progress is the fruit derived from it.

But what has all of this to do with might?
What must I do, according to your plan?

Your task is now to satisfy the world.
The cause of all this discontent is known
To you; and, with a single, mighty stroke,
All can be changed to happiness and joy.
Your only hope is that you stop all war,
And then remain a champion of peace.

To discontinue war!?

Your might will then
 Extend to every corner of the earth.
 In every home will people worship you:
 And even I, myself; for in our home,
 All brilliant with the glare of industry,
 Will we rejoice that this has come to pass.
 Our son will aid in keeping peace on earth.

Our son! To aid in keeping peace on earth!
My Angel Love! From whence this master mind
That has conceived for me this noble plan?

ANGEL LOVE

I only deal with Nature as she is;
 And aim to not distort the works of God.
 By doing this disaster is averted,
 And peace and friendship then go hand in hand.
 Success is sure to follow in this wake.
 Instead of forcing men against their will,
 You now can aid them to prosperity.
 Come! Let us not delay. Our model home
 Awaits us. Discontent is in the air,
 And murder's not yet ceased. My champion
 Must now proclaim his greatest victory,
 And be the noblest hero of all time!

WAR GOD

It is a mighty stroke.

ANGEL LOVE

And means your life
 Or death. I love you, Come!

WAR GOD

My Angel Love!

Exit together.

CURTAIN

*For Joy and Happiness we ever fight:
They only come from doing what is right.*

ACT V.

Same Day. Later.

SCENE: *A spot on battle-field. A General and the two diplomats are conversing.*

GENERAL

He says I am a coward? Foul fiend!
He is the coward, and were he here, I'd drink
His life's blood!

1ST DIPLOMAT

And he says you are a sham:
Mere shadow of a man; and that his fort
Would stand against a hundred more like you.

2ND DIPLOMAT

And he remarked that only twenty men
Were all he'd need to place against your own.
He even called you "Puppy", and desired—

GENERAL

Withhold your speech, or I will rip you open!
A cur like him must never live the day.
If he were here, with ev'n a thousand like him,
Th' entire drove would wallow in their blood!
A coward! And from the lips of him! Ah, wait!
What cruel torture for myself and sword!

1ST DIPLOMAT

He may arrive, my lord.

2ND DIPLOMAT

Yes, he did say
That he had business to transact with you.

GENERAL

And business will it be, if ever he
Does cross my line of vision! And for his men,
When they will have to dig his resting place.
His haggled form will roll upon the ground;
And, with a final stroke, I then will sever
His carcass from that useless mass of bone
That never had a brain! What do I see?

1ST DIPLOMAT

It is he now.

GENERAL

I'll go to meet the dog!

2ND DIPLOMAT

Wait! Do not be too rash in this attempt.
Let's hear him speak; for know you there will be
Sufficient time for you to do the deed.

GENERAL

But time is precious when a brute like him
Is still at large on earth.

1ST DIPLOMAT

But still there's time;
And he is almost here.

GENERAL

Oh, fevered sword!
You soon will have your wish. This trusted steel
Rejoices at the coming prospect here!

Enter other General.

Now, devil, speak! Waste not your words, for you
Are short-lived on this earth.

OTHER GENERAL

Whate'er the time
That God will grant my stay upon the earth,
I will be thankful for't. But what is now
The reason for this great display of anger?

GENERAL

Just as I've said before! You have no mind,
And cannot understand when brains do work.
A useless ornament in stripes and brass;
That brags of nothings, and does less than that.
I'll make you understand, before you're through:
So, speak, and do not play with useless words!

OTHER GENERAL

Well then, I will. My mission at this hour
Is to propose some terms of settlement
For this great strife. It has waged long enough.

GENERAL

What! Dog and coward that you are! Some terms!
Is that the text of your last speech on earth?
There are no terms, excepting by the sword,
So now prepare to die!

1ST DIPLOMAT

Hold! Hear him through.

GENERAL

His words have not the worth of list'ning to.
Hear now the distant cries of all my men:
They're clamoring for war, and wish to fight.

OTHER GENERAL

You lie, when you do make that bold assertion.
Your men despise all war: and so do mine.

GENERAL

A liar now! Oh, damn your curséd soul!
I'll have your life, or know the reason why!

1ST DIPLOMAT

Withhold yourself, for one brief moment more.

GENERAL

For one brief moment! Every one's an hour!
I will not wait: the devil's waiting him.

2ND DIPLOMAT

You must await; for it's not generalship
To act too rashly in a case like this.

OTHER GENERAL

Our armies, for some reason still unknown,
Have mutinied; and now we will be forced
To use diplomacy to bring about
The settlement which war was meant to bring.

1ST DIPLOMAT, *aside to 2nd Diplomat.*

Diplomacy! This is no place for us!

OTHER GENERAL

We both have fought, and proved that we are equals.
Could we fight longer, there might be a change.
But under these conditions are we forced
To cease, and now affect our peace at once.

GENERAL

Affect your peace in Hell! And I'll remain
On earth, to wipe the stains of your crude work
From off its face. You harm the Universe.
You and the devil may talk peace until
Your cinders do not crackle any more!

OTHER GENERAL

Had we the men, and you would still wage war,
'Twould give us pleasure to defeat your hopes.
But now we're powerless: the men command,
And all hopes of continuance are lost.

2ND DIPLOMAT

It seems that if you'd kill the mutineers,
You could proceed.

OTHER GENERAL

That is impossible.
There's not a man who will consent to fight.
And, as I've said before, they are in power.
You're foolish to suggest a plan like this.

2ND DIPLOMAT

What! Foolish?

GENERAL

Yes, to waste your words on him.
Are you awakening to the nature of the cur?
He's called you foolish, and you only stare,
As one who's blinded by a sudden light.
Stand back! Give now my trusted sword the chance
To put an end to all his deviltry!

OTHER GENERAL, *drawing sword.*

Yes, give us way: I'll play him at his game.
Bear on your hardest, lest the fight grow tame!

They clash.

GENERAL

A braggard unto death! Like all the fools:
They cannot see destruction in advance.

OTHER GENERAL

Your work is crude. Say when you wish to die.

GENERAL

At any moment after you have perished!

2ND DIPLOMAT, *to 1st Diplomat.*

Our work has once more set aright the fire!

1ST DIPLOMAT, *to 2nd Diplomat.*

And we should get no little praise for this.

Bugle. Enter officer and aides.

2ND DIPLOMAT

Desist for one brief spell. A messenger.

OFFICER

Dear General, I've come to state good news.
Our men have taken on a second thought,
And now would plunge into the fray again.

GENERAL

I knew that they could never stand the strain
Of idling thus; and babbling 'bout their homes.
And, now that they have had a little rest,
Their work will henceforth be the more efficient.
Wait 'til I kill this beast; then I will go
Back to our lines and lead them to success.
A few more strokes and all will be complete.
Lay on, you devil! I am needed hence.

They resume fighting, rays of white illuminate the scene.

OFFICER

A brilliant spectacle, I will admit!

GENERAL

This splendid daylight aids me in my work.

OTHER GENERAL

And exercise is what I've needed long.

Enter War God and Angel Love, unobserved.

ANGEL LOVE

Oh!

WAR GOD

Do not frighten at this crude display.
The wicked now avenge their awful wrongs
Upon themselves. There'll be no loss or gain.

ANGEL LOVE

But it must not continue.

WAR GOD

No, my Love.

OTHER GENERAL

Othér General disarms General.

Now, take that which you were so prone to give!

WAR GOD, *stepping forward.*

Halt!

OTHER GENERAL

Oh! That mighty power again! Our strength!
Why do you stop the play which gives you life?

WAR GOD

Give life or death, remain as now you are.
Your tasks upon this earth are at an end;

And in your places other generals
Will lead, with standards of another hue:
From crimson to the dazzling white of peace!

GENERAL

Then you are not our War God any more?

WAR GOD

There is no God of War. He is now dead,
And in his place a God of Peace has risen.
Send messengers back to your men of war,
Informing them at once of this great change.

Messengers depart.

In future, when the earth shall be upheaved,
'Twill be for Progress' sake, and not to rob
The earth of all the benefits it's gained.
No longer shall the rule of death and spoils
Prevail; for every step that man shall take
Will lead unto a brighter, nobler life.
And all our former years that were misspent,
Will be a chapter for comparison.

OTHER GENERAL

Then we are nought. We can no longer serve
According to our training,—that of war.
What can we e'er expect to gain from peace?

A red glow appears. Then Satan.

WAR GOD

A thousand years would never set you right.
The earth could not endure your presence here.
Thus, I will give you leave to take your way
Into the only realm that's left for you.

Pointing to Satan.

He waits. Bid farewell to the land of peace!

Generals depart in Satan's direction, with bowed heads. Satan points the way.

1ST DIPLOMAT

Your Majesty, is there not some mistake?
Wouldst drive two worthy men into a hell?

WAR GOD

There's no mistake; but one there'd surely be,
If I would fail to likewise send you there.
You and your partner, devils to the core,
May aid to keep the fires of Hell alive.
Farewell, my puppets, who have aided me!

Diplomats depart in Satan's direction. Satan departs with them, but red glow remains.

Cheers of soldiers in distance.

ANGEL LOVE

The news of peace has reached them!

WAR GOD

Yes. The cheers

That stand for future glory now arise.
For future glory that is civilized!
My Angel Love, how long a soul must live,
Before all great mistakes are brought to light!
Through long and countless ages have I erred,
And sent great legions forward to destroy:
But now your soul, all purity and love,
Has conquered mine, the very opposite.
And now no greater joy could I possess,
To know that all the world can have its wish.

More distant cheers of soldiers.

A million men made happy on this day!
And millions more will soon obtain the news.
Your wives and sweethearts now can happy be,
Through all the ages, to eternity.
And, I must now depart,—to take my place
Among the other demons of my race.

Satan appears again.

ANGEL LOVE

Depart? Why, no! Our home is waiting us,
Where now we will enjoy a brilliant life.

WAR GOD

A brilliant life 'twill be: but only you
Are to partake of all its splendid gifts.
The earth is now transforméd into peace,

And never will a War God rule again.
Thus, is there no need for a God of Peace,
To hold his sway o'er peaceful citizens.
Moreover, I have done so many wrongs,
That even Satan cannot cope with me.
But he's possessor of the only home
In which I rightfully belong.

ANGEL LOVE

Ah, no!

Do not desert me in this hour of bliss.
Remain with me and help to build our home.

WAR GOD

The home is built already. All it needs
Is perseverance on the part of man,
To make it most complete.

ANGEL LOVE

But do not leave me!

WAR GOD

My Angel Love, the grief I might arouse,
By taking from the earth the last great cause
Of misery, you soon must overcome.
I go where I belong; where I did send
Those other sinners: down into a hell.

Go now, and spread your soul among the homes
That do await thee. All of life is new,
And must be molded into proper form.
With Love comes everlasting happiness:
So, haste away, and revel in your work.
Forget the mighty War God of the past!

Exits with Satan.

Angel Love swoons.

CURTAIN



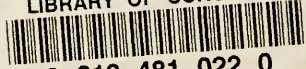
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